

# ***True Love***

***'I am going to speak tenderly to her...  
and make the Valley of Trouble  
a door of hope.'***

(Hosea 2:14-15)

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***I dedicate this book to you.***

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## Introduction

Of the billions of humans now alive and kicking, let two of them fall in love, marry, and yet it can't stick. They *chose* each other, and even still...

Just two can't make 'love' work – not two lovers, two races, two nations, two siblings, two people.

We crave to know true love. That's the deep well of thirst in every eye, every soul. It's not in our control, however. Our own spirits are not the source, the spring - that's *why* our 'love' breaks down.

When we see this, when we feel this, our hearts cry out to God to know *true* love. We need his touch, not just a story. We need the healing Spirit of God's love, not a religion.

In this short book I share with you the simple, powerful story of Jesus and his offer of God's love and Spirit to you.

## 1. The Story

Jesus said we had to become like children to enter the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup> We have to simplify. Here is the story of Jesus, the story of the Bible, in a very simple way:

God made everything. He made the world and made people in the world. God lets people choose if they want truth, if they want God, or not. All people choose to do wrong things. This is called 'sin'. Our sin is why the world is dangerous and can be mean. Our sin is why there is sadness, and even death.

God loves all people. But he is a good God and must punish and destroy sin. So God did something amazing! He became a human, like you and me. His name was Jesus. He was born with a special mission: To punish sin and forgive people. Here is how he punished sin: He said *he* would die for our sin. He said this punishment would pay for our sin.

After Jesus died for our sin, he came alive again! Yes, he rose up from the dead. And Jesus told all people that if we come to him, if we let *him* come to us, he will give us this forgiveness of sin, and also give us life after death.

This is the story of Jesus.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 18:3

## 2. What Is Love?

(Grab a pen if you have one)

**Q. *Who in your life has loved you?*** You may have to think back, or think hard, but who would you say has been 'honest' in their care for you? Might not be a mom or dad, or even a sibling. Maybe it was a teacher or someone else in your path?

A: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q. *Now, did that person approve of anything and everything you wanted to do or say?***  
Were they a person who just stood back and told you to do whatever you wanted?

A: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q. *And if not, why is it you think of that person as someone who loved you, or cared for you?***

A: \_\_\_\_\_

Now think of someone who truly did *not* love you. You probably don't have to think back too far, nor think too hard. Were they someone who did right, and challenged you to do right?

So when it comes to true love, true care, we are not dealing with people or relationships that just let us do whatever we want. We all know this. In

fact, in this challenging and dark world, it is almost completely the opposite. People who stand up to you and challenge you *not* to do what you want, tend to be those who really care about you.

This tells us a lot about love, about *true* love. This is true about people, and this is true about God. Ponder this for a moment. God – like anyone truly loving in your life – does not stand back and allow you to '*go with the flow*'.

The world is the way it is because people go with the flow of their sin – their choices to do wrong: Broken promises, adultery, pornography, child abuse, trafficking, mockery, humiliation, robbery, exploitation. This comes from people very much doing what they crave – going with the flow of their appetite and the laughter of their friends.

God opposes our choices to sin, to wrong one another. We're told in the Bible – by the prophets and by Jesus himself – that he hates sin and will judge it. The true God of love, loves truthfully.

Are you tired of false love? Are you tired of trusting in yourself to know love and find love?

Have you seen that we need the true God of love to teach us and touch us?

Here is a famous passage of the Bible, where a man named Paul, talking to a church group that were having differences and divisions, defines

love:

***'If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.***

***Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.'***

(1 Corinthians 13:1-8)



### 3. Judgment

This might seem like an irrelevant section in a book about love. But we do need to note this: Jesus speaks about judgment for sin a lot. He speaks about himself judging all people at the end of time, and he speaks about true punishment, even eternal punishment. Take this one verse, for example, of Jesus, speaking to those who wrong children:

***‘Anyone who sins against a child, it would be better for him to have a millstone tied around his neck and to be thrown into the sea.’***

(Matthew 18:6)

Look at what Jesus said about his own betrayer, Judas:

***‘Woe to him! It would have been better for him if he had not been born.’*** (Matthew 26:24)

Jesus says we will all give an account for words we speak. He also refers to himself on the throne of judgment gathering all nations before him.<sup>1</sup>

So on the one hand we have an incredible picture of Jesus coming as God in the flesh, and laying down his life to pay for sin. But on the other hand, we have a message of judgment for those who do not come under the cover, under

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 12:36; Matthew 25:31-32

the mercy of this forgiveness of Jesus. He paid for our sin, offers us his protection, his covering by his own blood, but outside of that covering is judgment, punishment.

This is how things in life work, as well. If someone is willing to pay our debt, but we don't allow it, don't accept it, well, we remain with the debt. Same is true of God. His love is spiritual – and pays for the debt our spirits owe. But if we do not turn around (which is what *'repentance'* means), and we do not open our hearts, our hands, and receive his payment, well, we remain with our own debt for sin.

This brings us back to the introduction: All relationships – supposedly love relationships – seem to break down. And yet rather than recognizing that we do not hold the keys to true love, to true life, we step over one broken relationship, and go break another. We still call it 'love'.

The judgment for our actions – the consequences - follow us. They are laid out before us. We rarely speak of them. And yet there is a litany of tears in our trail. We ache under guilt for those hearts we have broken. And yet we tend to press on the same way. We do it again and again. We won't stop and consider.

Look at this amazing call of God:

***'If my people, who are called by my name,***

***will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear their prayer from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land.'***

(1 Chronicles 7:14)

#### 4. Grapes From Thornbushes

A few years ago my friends bought a house that was built on wetland. Over time the house began to move, sink, crack.

Have you ever tried to build a relationship on a false foundation? I'm not talking about picking the wrong *person*; I'm talking about picking the wrong *god*. In other words, you built the relationship on *your* morals (or lack of morals), on *your* definitions of right and wrong, *your* life values and purposes.

You see, if we want a particular fruit, such as grapes, we must find the source of that fruit, i.e. the grapevine. It is the same with 'truth' and 'love'. We cannot invent these things, or just pull them from wherever we choose. We must, rather, find the *source* of Truth and the *source* of Love.

***'Jesus said, 'I am the vine and you are the branches... No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.'*** (John 15:1-5)

We often plant our relationships in the soil of our own brokenness, but then we expect to grow something strong, something healthy, something deep and lasting.

***'Sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.'***  
(Hosea 8:7)

Most of the breakdown in our relationships come from the false foundation we have built on – our own selves. Soon we see the cracks in the walls, the sinking and sloping of the floors, and feel the draft of the cold wind outside.

So what is the foundation for true love in our lives? Let's look at God's way for marriage, as an example:

Marriage, as revealed clearly through the Bible, is a committed and exclusive relationship between a man and woman, with God as witness.

God's system for a true love relationship with his blessing is this: A man loves and worships the true God. A woman loves and worships the true God. As two worshippers of the one true God, this man and woman commit their lives to each other, often with a ceremony, sometimes not, and then they consummate this commitment by having sex. The act of sex was – and is – the marriage contract.

So two elements of a faulty foundation in marriage are when:

A) We have *not* committed our lives to the one True God.

B) We have *not* honored God's morals in marriage, for example if sex happens before and

not after the marriage commitment.<sup>1</sup>

When Jesus was asked what the most important command was, he said:

***‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’***  
(Matthew 22:36-40)

Effectively Jesus was restating the very first of the Ten Commandments given thousands of years before:

***‘I am the Lord your God... You shall have no other gods before me.’*** (Exodus 20:1-3)

For *true* love we need the *true* God to actually be king in our lives. We need to call him Lord, and live it.

Secondly, for true love to be experienced, we need to do things God’s way. We cannot plant thornbushes in our lives and then go to them and expect to find fruit. If we want the fruit of God’s blessing and God’s love in our own lives and relationships, we must do things God’s way.

Jesus said, ***‘Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house;***

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 2

**yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.'** (Matthew 7:24-27)

Have you made mistakes in your relationships?

Have you been the god of your own moral choices, rather than God himself?

Have you built structures on sinking sand, and now are overwhelmed at the chaos, the brokenness, the guilt?

No matter where you find yourself in relationships at this point, no matter how deep and dark the path behind you, or under your feet right now, Jesus can meet you here. He can redeem. He can **'make all things new.'**<sup>1</sup>

Do you want this?

What's it worth to you? Are you willing to die to yourself and rise to new life in Christ?

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 21:5

## 5. Who Is Love?

Faith changes everything. It activates God's truth in your soul. Faith – a deep and acted-on belief – brings God alive in you, and you alive in God.

***'Without faith it is impossible to please God.'***  
(Hebrews 11:6)

Faith is belief in action. Jesus called for 'followers', not just believers.

If you want the truth and Spirit of God to flow through your life – your past, your present and future – you will need to take a step of faith.

Jesus said, ***'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'*** (John 14:6)

Jesus said he was the ***'door'*** to salvation. (John 10:9)

If you want to follow Jesus, if you want God to pour out his Spirit in you, and forgive your sin, you can do this now. It is a decision of the heart and mind. It can help to whisper words – a prayer – to mark this moment. If you want, you can read this prayer below and make it your own. If you read it now to Jesus, he will save you and fill you with new life:



**Dear Jesus, thank you for dying for me. Thank you for paying for my sin. I want the forgiveness that you offer me. I want you to make me new, and make me pure. I believe in you. I will follow you. Thank you. Amen.**

If you just prayed this to God, he has heard you. Right now he has covered you with forgiveness, and filled you with his Holy Spirit. You are saved! You are new!

Jesus said, ***'Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.'*** (John 4:24)

It is very important that you now grow as a follower of Jesus, like a seed in good soil. After you finish this short book, I would encourage you to read another one called, ***'First Steps With Jesus'***. It is free on the website and APP.

However, let's take a minute to finish this section we started, and indeed finish this book. Let's answer the question, ***'Who Is Love?'***

You see, God is not a God of rules, but a God of Spirit and Love. The rules he has given us, we are told, do not make us good, but really just show us our sin. Let me explain. If you are given a rule to follow, it is because you do not naturally do this 'good' thing. You need to be told to do it. So the rule reminds us that we are naturally not

doing what we should. Put another way, rules don't save us; they show us that we *need* to be saved.<sup>1</sup>

God's ultimate rescue for us as humans, was to become one of us and pay for our sin. Then Jesus told us that he would pour out himself on us as the Holy Spirit. This is the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of God, the true Spirit of Love.

The essence of love – true love – is the person of God. When his Spirit pours into you, into me, we have the very source of the true Spirit of love.

Jesus said to the woman, ***'Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst... it will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'*** (John 4:14)

God is love. Jesus is God. His Spirit poured out in you – his own person – is true love. He is the wellspring, the source within your soul, and the foundation for your relationships.

***'God is love.'*** (1 John 4:8)

God, pure love, became man, became Spirit, and pours into you!

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ***'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has***

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 3:19-20; Galatians 2:16

***said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit.***  
(John 7:37-39)

True love is 'Truth' and 'Love', and Jesus is both. Truth is a person. Love is a person. And he is poured out on you, in you, by his Holy Spirit.

Allow him to come to you now. Allow him to lead you forevermore.

Jesus said, ***'I stand at your door and I knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me.'***  
(Revelation 3:20)

## **Appendix 1: Scriptures**

Here are some Scriptures referred to in the text of this book.

### **1. The Story:**

Acts 17:24-27; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; John 3:16/2 Peter 3:9; Romans 6:23; John 1:1-5,14/Philippians 2:6-8; Romans 6:8-10; John 1:12/John 5:24

### **2-3. What Is Love?/Judgment:**

Hebrews 12:6; Romans 5:12/Ezekiel 18:25; Romans 12:9; Matthew 12:36/Isaiah 61:8; Matthew 25:31-32/2 Corinthians 5:10/Hebrews 9:27.

### **4. Grapes From Thornbushes (Matthew 5:16):**

Galatians 6:7-8; Matthew 19:4; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Genesis 24 (note vs.67); Genesis 6:2 (note 'marriage' here is synonymous with sex); John 8:31-32/Matthew 7:21-23

### **5. Who Is Love?:**

John 1:12/Ephesians 1:13-14 (belief activating relationship with God); John 8:12; James 4:8; Romans 10:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:9 (The Spirit of Christ); John 16:13-15.

## **Appendix 2: Re Faulty Foundation**

I note in this chapter (*Grapes From Thornbushes*) that without God in a marriage, and his moral ways before and after the marriage, it will not stand.

You may know people, however, who are not believers in God, and have not done things God's way, and yet have a good marriage. Let me speak to this very briefly.

We are told in the Bible that God made all people in his own image, and has put eternity in their hearts. We are told he has given life, breath and '*everything else*' to people, including a conscience, and a sense of right and wrong. All people have 'laws' written on their hearts by God.<sup>1</sup>

There are many people who have not believed in Jesus, but they live by his principles and the leading of their conscience that Jesus gives them. I know people who do not believe in Jesus, and did not do things God's way in laying the foundation for their marriage, but they have a good marriage. Why? Well, because they actually *are* now depending on God's principles and ways.

For example, I know a man who claims to be an atheist, someone who believes there is no God.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 17:24-27; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Romans 2:14-15

Atheists have no scientific reason to be moral in their lives; in fact, if they believe in no God and no judgment and no spiritual moral code, they should feel absolutely free to do whatever they want, especially when people are not aware of it – simply for the comfort of ‘no shame’. He acknowledged this. And yet this same man is very faithful to his wife, both in public and in private. I asked him why, if there is no God, and no moral code nor judgment, why be faithful? Why go against the desires and temptations of the body and mind? He laughed, and said, *‘It is probably the influence of religion when I was younger!’*

Here we see that in this man’s life, the stability, loyalty, and ‘good conscience’ in his marriage, actually *does* come from following God’s ways, regardless of what he said he believed.

People who follow God’s ways, whether they claim to believe in God or not, to a degree will experience the truth and blessing of God. This is biblical teaching – natural consequences and blessing from living according to what God has said to be right and wrong. It is proverbial living. Many people are doing this, from all walks of life.

So does it really matter if we believe in Jesus, and follow his ways? Yes! It really does! We will be judged and blessed ultimately on our love of God and our following him.<sup>1</sup> You may have a

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:13-15

successful marriage – i.e. it may stay together and be honest – without choosing God. But for the experience of *'true love'*, God's own Spirit and his presence in your life and marriage, you must come to him in faith, open the door of your heart, and *'put into practice'* his teaching.

Let's go one step further here to close out. According to the Bible, there are people who truly have not yet heard or received the revelation of Jesus Christ. They are operating as best they can with their conscience and what they *do* know to be right and wrong. They are following God and goodness to the measure of revelation they have received. There are others of us who have received the full revelation of Jesus Christ, we have his Scriptures and know his truth, and yet we choose to do our own thing.

We are told clearly, over and over in Scripture by the prophets and by Jesus himself, that he sees the heart and will judge each person individually. So for those of us that do know the teaching and revelation of Jesus Christ, it is imperative we see, receive, and follow.

***'To those who have been given much, much is expected, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much will be asked.'***

(Luke 12:48)

**Thank you for taking time to read this book. I hope it encouraged you!**

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**[www.1peter1three.weebly.com](http://www.1peter1three.weebly.com)**





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***'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;  
before you were born I set you apart.'***

(Jeremiah 1:5)